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COVER: Silver Communion Beaker, 4½ inches high made by Samuel Parmele, for The First Congregational Church, Guilford, (See pages 123-128) photo by E. Irving Blomstrann

Connecticut Historical Society
BULLETIN

Volume 19 Hartford, October 1954 Number 4

William Johnston

PORTRAIT PAINTER, 1732—1772

Eliphalet Dyer, 1721–1807
Windham

Mary Ledyard (Mrs. Thomas Seymour)
1735–1807, Hartford

Six of the seven portraits owned by the Society in this exhibition (Gallery 1, October 18, 1954 through January 15, 1955) were acquired between 1840 and 1900. For some years many people have noticed the similarity of the paintings, and in general they were attributed to an unknown 18th century painter of the American School. The New Haven Colony Historical Society, and the New London County Historical Society, also had paintings by this unidentified artist. From external evidence we were seeking an artist working in Hartford, New Haven, and New London in the 1760's. We have yet to find absolute proof, but everything so far discovered seems to indicate that William Johnston was the painter of the group of portraits on exhibition.

The first clue to the identity of the artist was discovered by our President, Newton C. Brainard, in a series of scrapbooks. In an undated clipping, Edwin Pond Parker relates the discovery of an account book kept by Thomas Seymour, 1706–1767. One entry states: "Thomas Seymour paid William John-

ston, in 1764, eighteen pounds for painting his picture and that of his lady, Hepzibah Merrill." Unfortunately, the present location of this account book, and the portraits mentioned, is not known. It is proof, however, that an artist by the name of William Johnston was working in Hartford at the right date.

Chronologically, the next discovery was in *The Arts and Crafts in New England* by George Francis Dow, page 2: "William Johnston, portrait painter, formerly of Boston, son of the late Mr. Thomas Johnston, Japanner, died suddenly at Bridge Town in Barbados.—*Boston News Letter,* October 1, 1772."

William Johnston was born in Boston, December 30, 1732, the son of Thomas and Rachel (Thwing) Johnston. Knowing this, we still had to

Margaret Beauchamp
(Mrs. John Michael Chenevard)
1707-1783, Hartford

Ashbel Riley
1734–{ }, Wethersfield

prove he was working in New Haven and New London. Fortunately, *The New London Gazette,* October 9, 1772, contained the following: "died suddenly at Bridgtown in Barbados, Mr. William Johnston, portrait painter, who formerly carried on his business in this town."

A letter, dated New London, 1762, from Johnston to his father (now in possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society) says: "I have considerable Business Engag'd at New Haven, so that if I have my health continued, I've a good prospect before me."

This seems to be more than mere coincidence, especially since a number of the portraits are identically framed. In the above mentioned letter, he also says: "The frames I wrote for I hope are ship'd on board of Ayers. I shall soon have occasion for more, two in the ½ Lengths."

This past summer a Boston dealer had for sale a portrait of Charles Caldwell of Hartford. This Society has Caldwell's account book. Under date of September 1763, there is an account with "Wm. Johnson [sic], Limner"

totalling nine pounds, two shillings. Unfortunately, there is no settlement of this, but the account could well have been paid with the portrait.

A letter from William Johnston to John Singleton Copley dated Barbados, May 4, 1770 and published in the *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, Volume 71, pages 88-93 contains further information of value.

First he mentions his only sister, Mrs. Hobby; second he states that he resided at Portsmouth, New Hampshire for a year and a half; and third that he was paid seventy-five pounds a year as organist in Barbados.

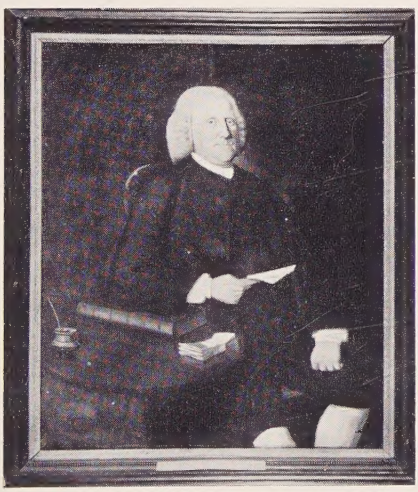
Sarah Johnston, sister of William, married in Boston to Wensley Hobby on May 3, 1759. They lived in Middletown, and among their children born there were Sarah, May 28, 1761 and William Johnston, June 11, 1765. One of the earliest Connecticut portraits by Johnston is that of Jabez Hamlin of Middletown.

A number of experts have examined the paintings of the 1760's found in New Haven, New London, and Hartford; and all seem to be by the same hand. If by chance they are not by Johnston, where are the portraits —and the sizeable number they must be—that Johnston painted in the three or more years he was in Connecticut?

We have borrowed as many paintings as possible from other institutions in hopes that, side by side, a comparison will help reach more definite conclusions.

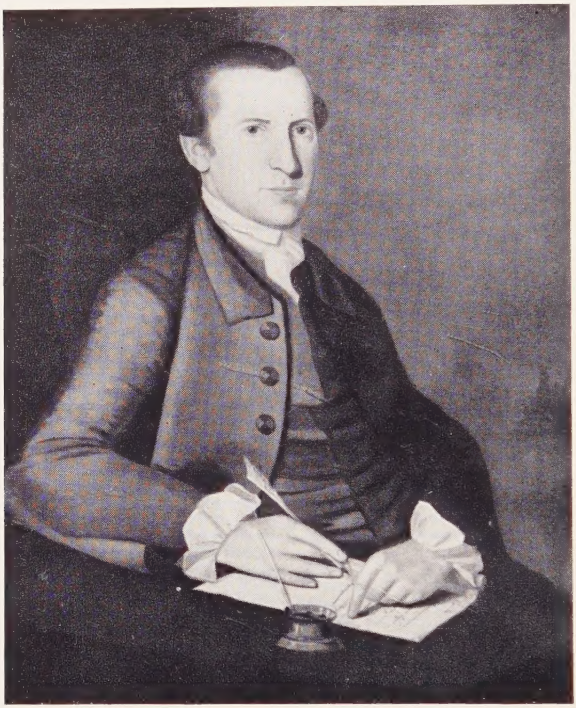
Included in the exhibition are the following paintings, property of the Society:

1. Margaret Beauchamp (Mrs. John Michael Chenevard), 1707-1783, Hartford, 25¼ x 30 inches
   presented September, 1869 by Mrs. Mary Chenevard Comstock



Jabez Hamlin
1709–1791, Middletown

Elnathan Whitman
1708–1777, Hartford



Ralph Pomeroy
1737–1819, Hartford

2. Eliphalet Dyer, 1721–1807, Windham
   presented December 5, 1848 by George Dyer, 41 x 49⅞ inches

3. Jabez Hamlin, 1709–1791, Middletown
   presented September 27, 1864 by Mrs. Abigail Hubbard, 41½ x 50¼ inches

4. Ralph Pomeroy, 1737–1819, Hartford
   presented September, 1900 by J. Evarts Green, 24½ x 37½ inches

5. Ashbel Riley, 1734–[ ], Wethersfield
   presented 1953 by George H. Gilman, 28¾ x 35¼ inches

6. Mary Ledyard (Mrs. Thomas Seymour), 1735–1807, Hartford
   presented 1885 by Mary Seymour, 40½ x 50¼ inches

7. Elnathan Whitman, 1708–1777, Hartford
   owned by the Society in 1840, 40¾ x 50 inches

From other sources:

8. Ralph Isaacs, 1741–1799, New Haven
   lent by the New Haven Colony Historical Society

(concluded on page 108)

The Connecticut Property Test and the East Guilford Voter: 1800

By Chilton Williamson*

The old adage that where there is smoke there must be fire has, more often than not, survived the test of experience. If one were to assume that the same were true for the history of suffrage reform in America, one could infer that the absence in any state of a crusade to democratize the franchise indicated either that a small proportion of adult males were unenfranchised or that the proportion which could not vote was indifferent to the privilege of voting. As a matter of fact, this test would exclude from analysis many of the seaboard states.

One important exception, however, would be Connecticut. The political history of this state at the beginning of the nineteenth century cannot be understood except in terms of the efforts of the Jeffersonian Republican party not only to sweep away all vestiges of an established church but also to reform suffrage qualifications which had remained unchanged since the Revolution.[1] Republicans attacked the property qualifications in the newspapers and in magazines. During the years 1803-1804, they endeavoured to carry the Assembly with them. Undismayed by their lack of success at this time, they continued to agitate the question, finally achieving success in the Constitutional Convention of 1817.

For many years, therefore, Republicans waxed eloquently about suffrage being among the rights of man and heaped ridicule upon the claims of their Federalist opponents that suffrage reform would prove inimical to liberty, property and public order. Although Federalists proved impervious to their opponents' arguments and counter-arguments, they endeavoured to make the telling point that the property tests excluded none but the very poor because a large majority of adult males could meet the freehold or personal property test.

Republicans were highly skeptical of the validity of this line of reasoning. They endeavoured to refute it by pointing out how small a percentage of adult males voted. This fact was sufficient, they claimed, to demonstrate that the property tests were undemocratic both in theory and in practice. Federalists did not deny the fact that relatively few voted but they did deny what Republicans had inferred from this fact. In their opinion, the proper inference was that the voter did not exercise more often his right to vote because he was quite content with the existing state of affairs under Federalist management. What discontent did exist was due to demagoguery, partisan politics and unwholesome ideas derived from the bad example of the French Revolution.

Whether or not the property tests were undemocratic in practice as well as in theory remained exclusively a matter of opinion during the years suf-

* Chilton Williamson is Associate Professor of History at Barnard College and Columbia University. In 1949 he published *Vermont in Quandary*. He is currently working on a book entitled, *The Suffrage Issue in American History*.

frage issues were important in Connecticut's politics. Neither Federalists nor Republicans took the trouble to determine the number of persons who would qualify in even one town and to publish the results. Their neglect to do so is understandable in the light of the considerable amount of labor involved. Nevertheless, town records provided them, as they do the historian, with the information necessary to indicate with a reasonable degree of assurance whether or not the property tests were undemocratic.

All the historian needs to do is to read the statutes governing the franchise and then to apply them to each adult male who was assessed for the purpose of taxation in any one or all towns. The number whose assessments meet the minimum qualifications will be the number of adult males who could meet the property tests. The obstacles to a complete reconstruction of the potential electorate of Connecticut during the early part of the nineteenth century are lack of money and of time. For these reasons, not even distinguished historians of various phases of Connecticut's history have dealt with this subject nor is it likely that the task will ever be done save through the collaboration of a number of individuals.

Assuming that it is better to have some light on the subject rather than none at all, an examination of the tax records of East Guilford for 1800 has been undertaken.[2] Until 1826 when it was incorporated as Madison, East Guilford was one of several small communities or church societies which comprised the town of Guilford proper. The inhabitants of Guilford were engaged in a number of activities, including farming, ship-building and shipping. East Guilford, however, was primarily an agricultural community.[3] That such was the case in 1800 is convincingly demonstrated by the tax list for that year. As a farming community, it would be reasonable to assume that it was not unlike the majority of small farming towns in a predominantly agricultural state.

This same tax list gives us some of the facts which in conjunction with others enable us to determine the number of adult males over twenty-one. The names of two hundred and thirty-five persons appear on the list. This figure, however, includes twelve women, presumably all widows, who owned taxable property; nineteen male polls of eighteen to twenty-one years of age; two absentee-owners of land; and one minor under guardianship. If these are excluded, the figure for the number of adult male residents is two hundred and one. Of this number, one hundred and sixty-seven were male polls twenty-one to seventy and thirty-four were either over seventy or were exempted from the sixty dollar poll tax because they had met all the requirements of the militia laws.[4]

Having determined the number of adult male residents, it is now necessary to determine what were the voting qualifications in 1800. In addition to meeting the test of age and of being of "a quiet and peaceable behavior," no male could vote unless he possessed a freehold worth seven dollars a year or was the owner of personal property on the general list of assessments worth one hundred and thirty-four dollars. Men who met these tests could be admitted as freemen qualified to vote in state elections. Those admitted to the freemanship could not be denied the right to vote in town-meeting.[5]

The precise meaning of the freehold and personal property qualification in Connecticut and elsewhere has seldom, if ever, been made clear. Some have

assumed that the former referred to income from the sale of produce or to probable income if the freehold had been let out to a tenant. Actually, in Connecticut the legislature assigned to each category of land a probable yearly income, depending upon where the land was located in the state. In and about East Guilford plow lands were assigned an annual value of one dollar and sixty-seven cents per acre, meadow lands one dollar and twenty-five cents, and so forth. The lowest annual value or income for the purpose of assessment was seven cents for each acre of unenclosed land.[6]

The personal property qualification, also, has been sometimes misunderstood. Some writers imply or state that any person who owned one hundred and thirty-four dollars of personal property could qualify. Nevertheless, the weight of the evidence of statutes and contemporary accounts indicates strongly that only the categories of personal property which were assessed for taxes were intended to be the basis for establishing this qualification. In Connecticut only silver plate, livestock, carriages, clocks, and income from trades or professions were considered as personal property. This list of personal property items, it should be noticed, excludes such items as clothing and house-furnishings in general.[7]

Applying these tests to the two hundred and one adult male residents of East Guilford in 1800, one discovers that if the town fathers had faced the wholly hypothetical situation in which it would have been their duty to admit all qualified males to the freemanship, only one hundred and thirty-one could have been admitted legally under the freehold qualification.[8] If the personal property qualification had been the only one, it would have very severely limited the potential electorate because only seventy-eight persons met or exceeded a minimum total assessed valuation of one hundred and thirty-four dollars for *both* real and personal property. Not one landless person assessed for taxes could have qualified under the personal property test. Presumably, only the relatively rich who did not own a freehold with an annual value of seven dollars could have qualified under it.

If these figures have been arrived at by the correct procedures, only about sixty-five per cent of the adult male residents of East Guilford could lawfully meet the freehold test. Indeed, the tax list shows that thirty-seven males over twenty-one were landless, that thirty-three freeholders out of a total of one hundred and sixty-four could not meet the minimum freehold qualification and that these freeholders comprised twenty-five per cent of all freeholders. Of the total number who could not vote, about one-half were freeholders and one-half were not. The freeholders who could not qualify as freemen obviously include the eleven who owned one-half to one acre each and the twenty-nine who owned two to five acres. Somewhere between the ownership of five to ten acres the freeholder appears to have passed from the ranks of the unenfranchised.

If a Jeffersonian Republican had examined the tax list for East Guilford in 1800 and had employed the procedures used above to determine who could and who could not qualify, he would have had at his command evidence to demonstrate that in this community the property tests were undemocratic in practice. Undoubtedly he would have attempted to generalize from this situation about the lack of democracy in the state as a whole. If he had, it would have been good politics but not a sound generalization. Nevertheless, this sampling of the potential electorate in East Guilford may

indicate an important reason for the demonstrable fact that in Connecticut the suffrage issue was much more important than it was in Massachusetts where the evidence indicates a really extensive electorate.[9] (Note: *The manuscript of this article, with source references, may be consulted at The Connecticut Historical Society Library.)*

Members Admitted April 6, 1954—October 5, 1954

Eliot N. Bidwell
Mrs. J. Kell Brandon
Helen Parsons Bridge
Mrs. J. C. F. Bridge
Ruth E. Bridge
John O. Briggs
Mrs. Leon P. Broadhurst
Mrs. George Cleveland Capen
Hale L. Colton
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Charles Crehore Cunningham
Richard W. Davis
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Richard K. Loveland
Henry Reed Mallory
Chauncey P. Manning
Mrs. Chauncey P. Manning
Louis Melville Miner
Mrs. Louis Melville Miner
Reginald C. Morrell
John J. O'Brien
Mrs. John J. O'Brien
Mrs. Leonard J. Patricelli
Arthur B. Peck
Mrs. Arthur B. Peck
Mrs. Wallace W. Perkins
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Mrs. Harold A. Preston
Mrs. Hazel Booth Raise
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Mrs. John Taylor Roberts
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Edward L. Sheppard
Mrs. Harold G. Skinner
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Mrs. C. Raynor Smith
Mrs. Sidney E. Stockwell
Dwight Garfield Stone
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Mrs. Robert Tennant
Mrs. Raycroft Walsh
Helena G. Waterfall
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New York, N.Y.
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Brockville, Ontario, Canada
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Portland, Ore.
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Ruth Therese Hammond,
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Mrs. Homer Joe Hatch,
Paso Robles, Calif.
Mrs. Ruth Windon Hayden,
Seattle, Wash.
Mrs. Dan Kelty, Jr.,
Temple City, Calif.
Mrs. Nina Dorrance Kern,
Santa Cruz, Calif.

Connecticut Gravestones

IV

By Ernest Caulfield, M.D.

One of the pleasures of gravestone hunting in Connecticut is that source material is seemingly inexhaustible and therefore the hunter's interest seldom wanes. Regardless of the number of stones he may learn to identify there will still remain many more that defy detection and only stimulate his curiosity. Some of these unidentified stones may be separated into special groups, and although the stones of any one group may be superficially dissimilar they sometimes have enough of the same characteristics in shape, design or lettering to make it certain that they were made by the same man. One such group of stones is the subject of this paper. Despite the fact that the artist still remains aggravatingly elusive we have long regarded him as a very dear friend whom we have affectionately, though perhaps incongruously, nicknamed "The Glastonbury Lady." He acquired this name because he was the most popular stonecutter in Glastonbury in the 1730's, many of his best stones were made for women, and the hair arrangement on his faces, even on stones for men, usually has a distinctly feminine appearance.

This man made three different types of gravestones, all of them having a skillfully-cut, curving upper edge. Occasionally one finds artistic scrolls, and small rounded protuberances which must have been difficult to complete inasmuch as an accidental blow with a heavy hammer would have been enough to break them off. This delicately carved edge is very well shown on the unadorned stones, those without faces or skulls, such as the stone for Mary Chapman who died in Windsor in 1729 (Fig. 2). Stones of this type seldom have a border.

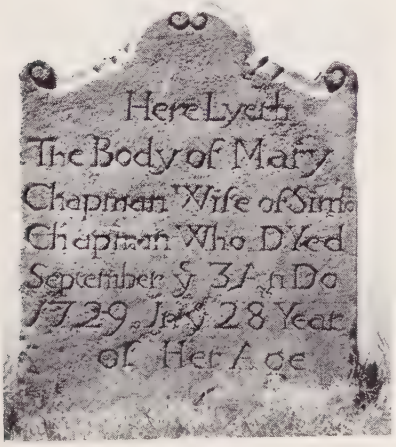

Fig. 2

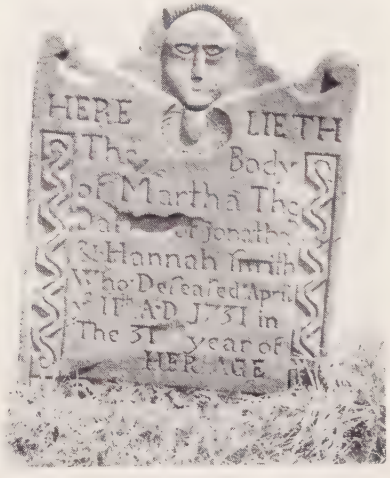

Fig. 5

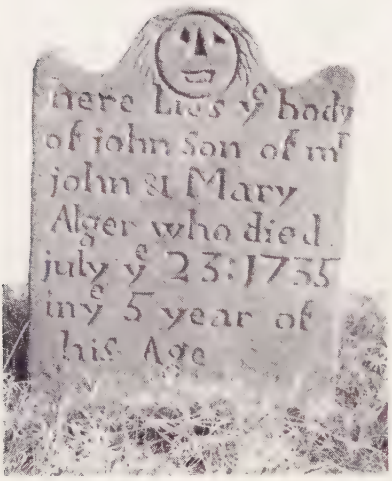

Fig. 3

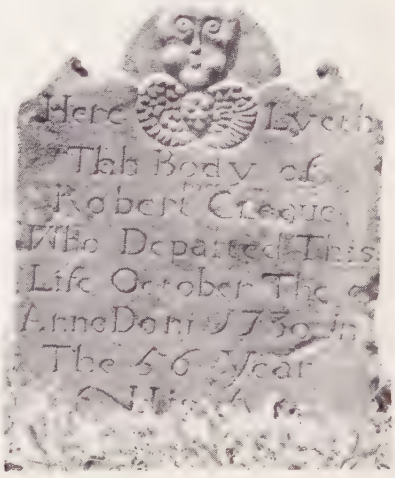

Fig. 4

A second type of gravestone, much more rare than the previous type, shows very crude skull designs similar to those seen on early William Stanclift stones. These skulls are usually simple circles with triangular noses and eyes, prominent teeth, and a few straggling hairs for wings (Fig. 3). The upper edges, though gracefully curved, generally lack both the scrolls and rounded protuberances. Since the artist was certainly capable of much better work, one might suppose that this was his cheapest type of gravestone, good enough only for children, except that a stone of this type marks the grave of Captain Samuel Sedgwick who died in West Hartford in 1735.

The third and most interesting type shows that at his best this stonecutter was indeed a skillful artist. At the time of his greatest popularity (ca. 1720-1740) there were very few men in Connecticut who could compare with him in both imagination and craftsmanship. In contrast to stones of the second type, the stones for Robert MacCleave in Portland (Fig. 4), Martha Smith in Wethersfield (Fig. 5) and for Feles Pelet in Glastonbury (Fig. 1), all good examples of his work, must have taken considerable time and care to cut. This third type shows three-dimensional sculpturing which was something new in central Connecticut that early in the eighteenth century. The resulting faces with their long straight noses, bulging cheeks, and

Fig. 1

pouting mouths, frequently expressing various emotions, are characteristic, as are the ornate neck-pieces and geometric borders. The borders were made simply by cutting a series of alternating triangles and carving a long serpentine line in the remaining elevated stone.

Because of such marked variation one may rightfully ask for the evidence that these three different types of gravestones were made by the same man. Besides the previously mentioned curving upper edge the answer is in the lettering. It is true that a few other stonecutters had somewhat similar peculiarities, such as a mixture of small and capital letters (as in DYed, hiS and ThomaS), occasional misspelled words (as FeleS for Phyllis or Capten for Captain) and hooked numeral 1's at the beginning of a date. On a good many stones guide lines are still visible, and for some peculiar reason the words "Who" and "Age" almost always begin with capitals. In addition to these peculiarities, "The Glastonbury Lady" had two which were very much his own—an ampersand (&) with its tail protruding upward an unusual distance, and a small "a" with a prominent bulge in front. This pot-bellied "a" occurs on practically every one of his stones, and is his most important identifying characteristic, for it was used apparently by no one else. Additional evidence that one man made at least two of the three types here described may be seen in Wethersfield where the grave of Abigail Kilborn is marked by a headstone of type III and a footstone of type II.*

These stones are most commonly found east of the river, particularly in Glastonbury and in Old Lyme, although there are a few in many of the river towns below West Springfield and in most of the shore towns between New London and New Haven. From this geographic distribution as well as from the texture of the stones it may safely be assumed that this artist lived near the East Middletown (Portland) quarries. In the absence of any definite records, however, one can only speculate on his identity although a number of possibilities readily come to mind. The stones for John and Love Mack (1734 and 1735), in an old neglected graveyard on Blood Road in Old Lyme, were definitely made by this elusive person, and John's estate paid "John Mervin for Grave Stons. . . 01-19-06." Very likely this refers to the John Marvin who died in Lyme about 1741, although his probate papers fail to reveal anything connected with stonecutting. So far as is known, he never lived near Middletown, nor is it known that he was paid for any other stone. He, therefore, was probably acting merely as an agent.

Another possibility is the second James Stanclift (1692-1772). He is known to have made gravestones in the 1720's, and the similarity of type II stones to those made by William Stanclift could thus be easily explained. The flat rosettes in the finials on Love Mack's stone in Old Lyme, and on the stone for Captain John Holmes in East Haddam, are similar to those made by

* On rare occasions one may find stones such as those for Joseph and Mary Maken (1725) and Thankful Porter (1741) in East Hartford with designs by Johnson and lettering by "The Glastonbury Lady," as though he had occasionally bought uninscribed stones from his fellow stonecutter, just as Joshua Hempstead is known from his diary to have done. These stones, however, are shaped more like ordinary gravestones of the period, and lack the graceful scrolls. On the other hand, there are two stones in Wethersfield shaped like "Glastonbury Lady" stones, but with lettering by Johnson. Here, then, is a little more evidence that the old stonecutters occasionally traded with each other.

this James Stanclift. In addition, the faces on some of the later stones made by James Stanclift "Junior" (William's son) appear to have been copied from "Glastonbury Lady" stones. But there is one serious objection to any of the Stanclifts as possibilities. The only stones which may be credited to them have very little else in common with the stones under consideration.

Also to be considered is Daniel Brewer who was born in Glastonbury in 1699, and who later moved to East Middletown where he bought and sold lots of land and worked in the quarry business with the Stanclifts. Brewer sold gravestones to Joshua Hempstead in 1736, and it so happens that there is a typical "Glastonbury Lady" stone in New London, dated 1736. Also, Richard Goodale, Brewer's father-in-law, has a typical stone; and the little gravestone for David "Son of Daniel & Elener Brewer", while it does not have the classical fat "a", does have the unusual ampersand and "Age" beginning with a capital. There the circumstantial evidence ends. But "Glastonbury Lady" stones are seldom found dated later than 1741, whereas Brewer was still in business at least until 1751 and 1752 when he shipped ten pairs of gravestones to New London. His name occurs, usually in connection with trivial matters, in various account books and in a few estates, but there is nothing definite as yet to help identify his style. Until more positive information comes to light, Brewer remains only a possibility.

Since stonecutting was the most lucrative business in East Middletown at that time, any one of a number of men could also have made these stones. John Miller, for example, would fit the bill because the Millers made gravestones. He died in 1745, owning "a Ston orger. . . Iron weges to coot Ston" and a few other tools commonly used in the business. And then there was John Edwards about whom little is known except that he lived in East Middletown and sold gravestones to Joshua Hempstead. There are other possibilities but we leave, with regret, to someone else all the fun of definitely identifying "The Glastonbury Lady."

WILLIAM JOHNSTON

(continued from page 100)

9. Mary Perit (Mrs. Ralph Isaacs), c. 1740–1816
   lent by the New Haven Colony Historical Society

10. Dr. Hall Jackson, 1739–1797, Portsmouth, New Hampshire
    lent by Amherst College, attributed to Copley

11. Charles Caldwell, c. 1732–1801, Hartford
    lent by the New Britain Institute

12. Sarah Deshon (Mrs. Samuel Wheat of Norwich), 1752–[ ], New London
    lent by the Lyman Allyn Museum

13. Thomas Mumford V, 1728-1799, New London
    lent by the Brooklyn Museum

History of the Highways of Connecticut

by Lewis E. Stanton*

The first Connecticut highway was, so far as we know, the Indian trail. Histories tell us that the Indian villages located on the shores of Long Island Sound and in the valley of the Connecticut River were devastated by the Mohawks of eastern New York. The Iroquois nation, which included the Mohawks, annually sent representatives to the river and shore tribes of Connecticut with tributes and orders from the great Council at Onondaga. These emissaries came into Connecticut upon the Indian trail. When John Mason sailed past Pequot (New London) in 1637, landing in the Narragansett country, an Indian runner came to his camp from Providence, Rhode Island with a letter from Captain Patrick urging him to await the arrival of his command. How did this runner come? Evidently by Indian trail. What route did Mason take on his westward march toward the Pequot forts? As there were no roads, he went over the Indian trail. The Indian path, trodden by native feet, was perhaps well worn, but it was a crooked path winding among the trees. One such path was a well-known Indian trail in Stonington, extending from the house of Walter Palmer on Wequetequock Cove to the house of Thomas Stanton near Pawcatuck River. A highway has since been laid over it.

After the Indian trail came the bridle path. Men and women traveled on horseback where they were not able to make their way in a wheeled vehicle. Let me recall the remarks of an English writer upon the subject of bridle paths: "Right down to the middle of the 18th century, the passage of a wheeled vehicle of any kind remained, on all but the main roads, an exceptional event of the day. To an extent which we now find it difficult to realize, the 17th and 18th century roads were trodden by animal feet."

To understand this point it is only necessary to recall the double saddles of New England. I remember seeing in the attic of an ancient house a great red saddle large enough for two people. Behind the saddle was often placed the pillion, or cushion, upon which a woman could ride behind her husband.

After the bridle path came the gig, or two-wheeled chaise. I could show you such a gig in which my ancestor Jared Eliot and his bride, Elizabeth Walker, made their wedding journey from Boston to Killingworth in 1757. That was the day of poor roads and the two-wheeled carriage. Still later, as the roads improved, the four-wheeled wagon was employed. My father

* Lewis E. Stanton presented the foregoing address to the Society October 7, 1913. A native of Clinton and an eminent lawyer in the state, he became United States District Attorney from Connecticut in 1884. His home, built by Adam Stanton in 1789, was opened as a museum by provision of his will. The museum contained the family gig referred to in this article, Wedgwood pottery and silver lusterware, Governor Saltonstall's chair, and many other rare and valuable antiques. Mr. Stanton died August 27, 1916.

well remembered when the first four-wheeled wagon was brought into town. People gathered around it and wondered whether travel would be safe in "that crazy thing."

Professor Alexander Johnson speaks of Hartford roads as follows: "Bad as were the roads of the United States almost everywhere, until the era of turnpikes set in and railroads in their turn forced the turnpikes up to a higher standard, the roads of Hartford and its neighborhood had a certain evil preeminence. The excellence of the soil was reflected in the bad character of the roads. Its tenacious clay only needed moisture enough to become a weariness to the flesh of horses and men. Within the last thirty years (date not given), says one authority, wagons have been seen sunk to the hub in the native clay of Pearl Street close to the center of the city. In 1774, the town prisoners for debt represented to the Assembly that the roads were for a considerable part of the year so miry and impassable that no one came to the jail to bestow alms upon the prisoners, and they petitioned that the jail limits should be enlarged."

In 1760, many residents of Hartford petitioned to the Assembly for a lottery to raise 6000 pounds to repair Main Street because it was the worst road in the colony. The late Major John C. Parsons stated in a public address that, according to tradition, not far from the beginning of the 19th century, Mrs. Daniel Wadsworth was unable to cross Main Street, except on horseback, from her home near City Hotel to the house of Colonel Wadsworth on Atheneum Lot. In 1717, the Assembly granted to Joseph Munson of New Haven the exclusive right of transporting persons and goods between New Haven and Hartford for seven years. This privilege was in consideration of his having "the cost and charge to set up a wagon to pass and transport passengers and goods between the two places."

In 1789, Enfield voted that the highways be kept in repair by a tax and that the rate be one penny half-penny on the pound. The surveyors were to lay out three-fourths of the highway money before the last day of June, with the remainder to come in the next fall months. On failure, they should be "Doomed" by the selectmen in a sum not exceeding twenty-four shilings.

Our ancestors did not build sky-scrapers, but they did have highway-scrapers. In 1815, Enfield voted that the selectmen be directed to procure a scraper for each highway district. Later on, each district was to find their own scraper, if desired, with the highway money in their district.

Enfield had common land. In 1728, it granted to Thomas Abbe the land formerly a highway, east of the old Sawmill, in satisfaction for a highway taken off the north side of his land. Other votes of this town show that a portion of the common land was awarded to persons whose private land had been taken for a public way.

Fairfield, in 1692, made Lieutenant John Hall and Sergeant John Thompson a committee to settle, stake, or stone the highway out, especially in the woods about "Pequonnock." Highways were also laid out at Fairfield Woods where there was a noted wolf swamp.

In Guilford 1719, a road was ordered to the sawmill on the Hammonasset River. Four reasons were given: 1) John Thompson had a tract of 3rd Division land and no highway to it, 2) a road was needed for carting

timber to and from the mill, 3) it would be the most direct road to Haddam, 4) the neighboring farmers belonging to Killingworth desired a road there so that, with convenience, they could enjoy "lectures and other neighborly converse in Guilford." The Guilford historian inquires, "Who could vote against a road needed for all these cogent reasons?" The main road in this town was much used by travelers between New York and Boston. In May 1774, it was part of the great mail route from Georgia to Maine. LaFayette passed over it during the Revolution. Stopping at the house of "Squire" Brown, where Music Hall afterwards stood, he was so much pleased with the succotash given him for lunch as to mention it to Mr. Ingersoll in France years later.

Turnpikes came into Connecticut in the 18th and 19th centuries. Between 1789 and 1856, there appeared nearly two hundred charters, or various acts relating to them. Many of these roads doubtless were never built. The scheme of all the charters is practically the same. A stock company, its capital and the amount of its land holdings, limited the company to build and maintain the turnpikes to the acceptance of the commissioners. They had the right to establish toll gates and collect toll rates prescribed by law. Generally, certain persons were exempt from toll such as travelers to attend public worship, persons liable to military duty traveling on duty, those going to and from the grist mills, and farmers attending to business in the immediate neighborhood. All these turnpike companies were finally dissolved and their roads given over to the public. Although stockholders lost their money, turnpikes marked a great advance toward good roads in Connecticut. They sometimes become unpopular as the English writer, formerly quoted, indicates concerning turnpikes in his country: "The Town of Liverpool, it is reported, is a great enemy of turnpikes. There are only three turnpikes within eight miles of it; none within four. Most of the great towns of Lancashire in 1794 have had sufficient interest to place the toll bars at some miles distance from them and this, it is alleged, was almost the sole cause of the wretched conditions of turnpike roads in that country as late as 1808."

In October 1797, the General Assembly appointed a committee of three citizens to lay out a direct road from New Haven to Hartford, through Berlin. In 1798, the committee accepted their report and chartered a turnpike company with James Hillhouse and others as corporators. This road was laid out from the State House in New Haven, by Temple and Grove streets, through New Haven, Hamden, Wallingford, Berlin, and Wethersfield, to the State House in Hartford—a distance given as thirty-three and three-fourths miles. The company had the privilege of erecting four gates upon it. From New Haven histories it appears that "this once renowned but now almost deserted airline turnpike, though not laid out by him (James Hillhouse), was by his executive ability brought to completion." When General Wade Hampton of South Carolina paid Mr. Hillhouse a visit, he showed him this public road and the oxen at work upon it. The General spoke to the negro man in charge, "See how those oxen work? Why, Tom, they know more than you do." To which Tom replied, "Yes, Massa, but dem ar oxen has had a Yankee bringing up." Mr. Hillhouse built this road as nearly as possible in a straight line. He also took charge of the construction of the famous

Farmington Canal between New Haven and Northampton, but soon after the canal was completed and ready for business it was superseded by the railroads.

The toll gatherer was considered fair game for any one who could pass a counterfeit quarter or half-dollar upon him. Shun pikes, or short roads, were built around the gates. In New York state, Chancellor Kent issued a special decree of injunction against a "shun pike" or "by road." He ordered that it be closed up and securely guarded so that none could shun the gate or evade the toll.

In 1668, Colonel Richard Nichols, Governor of New Netherlands, and the Honorable Francis Lovelace, his successor, paid a visit to Governor Winthrop. Later, in 1673, a shore Post Road was established, with mail once a month, between Boston and New York. Upon the old stage route in Clinton there is a small sandstone slab near the residence of the late Ely A. Eliot, marked "25 N.H." Tradition says this milestone was set up by Benjamin Franklin when he was Postmaster General of the colonies prior to the Revolution.

Soon after 1813, a turnpike was laid out from Killingworth to Haddam to intersect, at the latter point, the turnpike from Saybrook to Hartford. This north and south road joined Killingworth Main Street which ran east and west and there formed four corners. Promptly business, trade, stores, post office and markets moved to, or near, those "corners" and have remained there ever since.

Much work was done upon Connecticut highways by slave labor. Walls were built by the side of the road, the object being to get rid of the stone. The writer remembers being informed by several oldsters that the stone walls were built by negro slaves.

New Milford, in 1722, laid out a way on the east side of the Great River (Housatonic) beginning, by marked trees, at Rocky River and continuing to a brook called "Whemesink" at Gaylordsville. Another way was laid out from the south end of Mount Tom, near Wolfpit, crossing Deep Brook and east of Aspetuck, and running by the west side of the river to the northern bounds.

New Britain highways were laid out twenty, and sometimes forty rods wide in order to leave room for a new path when the old one was worn out or gullied by the streams. The principal street of Farmington was originally an Indian footpath. Probably other early roads conformed to some extent to the Indian trails. In 1686, Farmington voted to lay out highways to and through the Great Swamp. In 1687, there was a way called "the path from Hartford to New Haven." It passed through Berlin, west of Berlin Street; then southerly by Colony Road, past Meriden to Wallingford and New Haven. The first settlers of Christian Lane passed to and from Farmington by a route which nearly corresponded with the Indian trail between the lodges of the Tunxis and Mattabeset Indians.

When Reverend Amni Robbins brought his bride to Norfolk in 1762, they came on horseback, his wife riding behind him on a pillion. The roads were little more than mere trails, or bridle paths. When Ethan Allen traveled over one of these roads on Sunday, a Winchester grand juror emerged from a log cabin, seized the Colonel's bridle rein and attempted

to arrest him. The Colonel drew his sword and replied, "You — — — — woodchuck, get into your burrow or I'll cut your head off." Grand juror Balcomb, needless to say, retired quickly to his cabin. When, in the 1860's, it was proposed to build a railroad through this town, a native commented thus: "Build a railroad through Norfolk! Why, when I was a boy and lived there, it was with difficulty that even the crows could fly straight over the Norfolk hills."

Miss Caulkins, in her history of New London, tells us that John Williams obtained a lease on the ferry. "He kept the ferry when Groton and New London were one town, had but one minister and one captain's company." She also adds that the river border in New London, in the line of Water and Bank streets, was common land. It was sold between 1722 and 1724, reserving a common way to the water. These lots were about three rods wide; the average price three pounds. The proceeds were appropriated in order to build a house for town meetings and courts. In her history of Norwich, she says, "The roads leading into the country, and from town to town, were merely foot or bridle paths. It was a great advance when they were widened and cleared into cart-paths. The path to New London was exceedingly rough and circuitous with several pitches meriting the name of *break necks*."

In the history of Milford it is stated that the early roads of that town were not laid out, but that the land was, and that cart paths were made where the trees were thinnest. Some of the early roads followed the Indian trails much of the way.

In East Haven, the Totoket path was the earliest road through the town. A bridge was erected in 1644 where it crossed the Stony Creek. The first road, or common way, in Hamden was viewed as early as 1641 and probably did not extend beyond Hamden Plains. The best known of the highways was the old Cheshire road which was laid out in 1686 as the Farmington road.

In Tolland County, after the Revolution, Captain Levi Pease of Somers started a line of stages between Hartford and Boston. One stage left Boston from the sign of the Lamb each Monday morning at six o'clock, reaching Hartford on Thursday. The other, leaving Hartford at the same time, reached Boston in four days. The fare was four pence a mile.

Reverend George Colton of Tolland County seemed to know how to locate people on the public highway. It is related that he prayed as follows: "O Lord, we pray for the entire community; for those who pray for themselves. Above all, O Lord, we pray for that Caviler: that Trifler: that Freethinker: and that Deist. We will not call any names: Thou knowest well who we mean. He lives on the stage road about half way from Hartford to Norwich."

In the history of Somers it is recorded that Peter Kibbe kept a hotel and owned slaves, one of whom died on the stairway of his house. He also owned a great red wagon which was a wonder in those days. On town meeting day he brought in a neighbor, and when the people asked him how he got there, the neighbor replied, "I came in Lieutenant Kibbe's red flying chariot."

On the ancient Post Road from New York to Boston, or near it, stood the Killingworth church. East of it stood the house of Rector Abraham

Pierson, installed as pastor in 1694, died in 1707. Seventy-two years later President Ezra Stiles of Yale College made quite a journey over the roads of New England. From his diary of October, 1779 I take the following:

"I viewed the remnants of the Building in Killingworth about ten rods east of the Meetinghouse, commonly called the old or first college, being Rector Pierson's house in which he lived, and the scholars resided and studied the first five years till his death when the students were removed to Saybrook. It was a double two-story house, now converted into a Barn."

Mr. John Warner Barber in his *Connecticut Historical Collections* says that William Patterson peddled tinware in Berlin. Others peddled in Berlin with baskets carried by hand or on horses. Later, two-wheeled carts were introduced but, being found inadeqate, were succeeded by one horse wagons. These, in some measure, were replaced by very large carriages drawn by two and four horses.

The proprietor of the *Connecticut Gazette,* in 1765, proposed to revive his paper: "It shall be printed weekly at the rate of two pence for each paper, which is Eight shillings and eight pence for one year. A special post is appointed to carry it out of the common Post roads. All kinds of Provisions, Firewood, and Country Produce will be taken as pay."

Waterbury, in 1699, granted to John Judd and John Richardson each twenty acres of land on Steel's Brook, north branch, "provided they live four years there and do not predge [prejudice] the highways."

A Winchester chronicler records that the South Road was so "hard a road to travel" that Landlord Burr, who lived near Hayden's Brick Yard, used to detain his guests until after morning worship in order that they might benefit by his prayers in their efforts to get up the old dug road west of Burrville—a benefit they greatly needed.

In New Canaan a post office was established in 1817 with weekly mail; later, with two mails a week. This mail was carried on horseback to Stamford, then a distributing office. On one of the highways of New Canaan stood the stocks and whipping post. The whipping post was in an angle of the roads. Public notices were posted upon it because it stood on the public highway.

Waterbury, in 1760, voted that "In case any man see cause to remeasure his land according to art, and shall find his land to want measure, he may have liberty of laying out the wantage, and if he have too much he shall fill it up with Division land, and the several town measurers are impowered with the help of an Artist to make such surveys for thus regulating men's Land."

It is to be kept in mind that many of these exchanges of land in Connecticut took highway, or Division land, to reimburse a private party for so much land taken from him for highway purposes. Land was also taken from private individuals for public purposes, especially where a man had received an excess from the common, or Division land. These divisions were numbered. Thus we see that in Guilford "John Thomson has a tract of 3rd Division land and no highway to it." If, in the division of the town, a certain planter had received an excess of the common land, some of his Division land was taken for highway purposes.

In 1819, a road was laid out in Branford called a "pent road." Calvin

Eaton agreed to pay one half the expense if the town would pay the other half. The road was to be two rods wide, and to be incumbered by three gates, the location of the gates being given. The three gates, of course, saved the cost of fences on each side of the "pent road." The town agreed to the terms and the selectmen laid out the "pent highway." It was principally used for cartage of wood and charcoal, but also by persons desiring to ride or drive upon it. The public could use it by opening and closing the gates. After being maintained and used about seventy years, a lawsuit arose in its regard. The claim was then set up that it had never been legally laid out. The decision was that a "pent road" or "pent highway" is a public highway, notwithstanding the gates. Citation was made from a Vermont case in which Judge Redfield decided that "Those highways which are permitted to be pent are as much highways as any others, free to all persons who may have occasion to pass along them."

In 1722, Samuel Shepard of Plainfield informed the Assembly that there was great need of a ferry over the Quinnebaug between Plainfield and Canterbury. He stated, "I your petitioner do live near the sd river . . . The above sd ferrie may be stated to me and reasonable feas for the same . . . I do not see how I can afford ye same under four pence horse & man, Winter & Summer."

In 1660, the Assembly ordered that the ferry at Nehantic (Niantic) should henceforth belong to the farm of Governor John Winthrop "as he shall order his assigns, his Tenants attending the said ferry at all times as is necessary, for a reasonable and just Recompence. Magistrates and Deputies of the colony going free, according to Order."

In 1724, Samuel Mather of Lyme prayed to the Assembly, stating that "it would be publick benefit to the Cuntry to have a ferry kept over the Litle river known by the name of Liutts River near my house. Thereupon I humbly pray this Assembly would please to grant Liberty to your Memmorilest to keep Ferry over sd River and to state the fare of sd Ferry at four pence for one man horse and his load, two pence for one man: and your Memmorilest shall as in Deuty bound ever pray."

The stage fare between Hartford and Albany was five dollars. On this route a passenger, leaving the stage entered the tavern which stood on the hilltop. There he politely inquired if "the Lord were in," explaining, "It appears to me that we have come up high enough to find him."

The northern half of Litchfield County was at one time called Green Woods. The pioneers who penetrated Green Woods found no trails. So slow was colonization that in 1733, when Ezekiel Ashley of "Ousatunick" petitioned the Assembly to finish a road which he had begun within the limits of Salisbury in the direction of Hartford, the Assembly found the population so sparse that the expense would not be warranted. The petition was denied.

A historian of Litchfield says that the saddle and pillion were regarded by the upper and middle classes as articles of especial convenience and gentility, much more so than the carriage and coach. Many horses were trained to carry double, and it was not an uncommon thing to see father, mother, and at least one child mounted on the same horse.

Judge M. E. Merrill, in his address at the Barkhamsted Centennial (1879)

says that once a week "the post-boy came to the country tavern with his meager budget, his only paper being the *Connecticut Courant*, about one-tenth its present size, the wild notes of his horn heralding his approach long before he appeared in sight."

An early edition of the *Connecticut Courant* gives the following notice:

To Whom It May Concern

The subscriber having supplied his customers with the *Connecticut Courant* almost five years desires those who are in debt to him to make immediate payment as he is called upon to make speedy settlement with the Printers. Those that intend to continue this custom must in the future depend upon making quarterly payments as no papers can be had till they are paid for

Eben Burr Jr
Norfolk

In May 1765, the Assembly resolved that "Whereas this Assembly in May 1759 did appoint Jabez Hamlin & Seth Wetmore of Middletown & Mr. William Welles of Glassenbury to shorten and straiten the Road from Hartford to New Haven, the said Committee were limited to the Towns of Wethersfield, Farmington, Middletown and Wallingford. Therefore Resolved That said Committee or any two of them be & hereby are appointed to view the Road from sd Town of Wallingford to the Town platt [sic] in New Haven, and view where sd Road may be straitened and shortened for the commodiousness of Traveling by Carriage or otherwise, & on such View to make a full Description thereof & make Report thereon to the General Assembly in October next."

In 1754, the following testimony was given to the Legislature:

"To the Hon. Gen. Assembly now sitting at Hartford—

These certify that we are humbly of opinion that the Highway lately opened or proposed to be at Tolland from the highway or town street, to a place called Flints [ ] may without any extraordinary cost be made as fesabell a road as allmost any we know of of that lenth for the Town of Tolland afore sd.

Timothy Nash
David Bissell"

In some of these ancient roads the passenger was jolted and distressed going down hill as well as up. In one case an occupant of the stage coach called out to the driver, "Are you going down any further, for if you are I must get out, for I do want to remain on *airth* a little while longer."

In 1867, a case arose which seems to show that the beaches and shores of the state are public highways.

"It appears that the defendant entered upon a line of beach between ordinary and extraordinary high water mark and took therefrom a load of seaweed which grew in the adjoining harbor (an arm of the sea) and had been thrown upon the beach by tides and waves. The beach was not in any enclosure of the plaintiff, nor connected strictly with any upland upon which the tide never flowed, but was upon the side of an extended field of salt meadows which were covered by extraordinary tides: and it had been formed by the abrasion of the shore, and the washing and piling up of the coarse sand and gravel by the waves of that arm of the sea. The public had immemorially

used the beach by passing and driving over it, and taking seaweed from it. The plaintiff owned the adjoining shore between the high and low water mark and he and his grantors had immemorially used it. It was a sedge flat and they mowed it and took the annual crop of sedge."

Now, upon these facts, the court held that the "shore" or "seashore" is that space of land on the borders of the sea which is alternately covered and left dry by the rise and fall of the tide—in other words—that space between high and low water mark. Citing from another Connecticut authority, "the shore is that space of ground which is between ordinary high water and low water mark."

It is seen, therefore, that the term "beach" may not always be used in the strict sense of the "shore". If reference is made to that part which is between high and low water mark, then it is the "shore" or the "sea shore", and there can be no doubt that the sea and its shores constitute a public highway.

In preparing this sketch I have purposely excluded natural highways (except the allusion to the seashores), all railroads, whether steam or trolley lines, and our modern system of good roads. My object is to direct attention to an entirely different subject: the long and hard struggle which our ancestors had to obtain any highway whatever. Why did they forsake the valleys and build roads over the hills? One good reason was the fear of the Indian. These hardy pioneers proposed to have their dwellings where they could see the situation and be early warned of the approach of the savage. Again, why did not the learned men of the times instruct the people as to the incalculable value of good roads? The minister, the doctor and the lawyer to whom the early settlers looked for a solution to their problems must have read history and had at least a general knowledge of the roads built by the Romans, yet I cannot find in the writings of any of these teachers of New England that the people were ever given salutary lessons upon this important subject.

It has taken two centuries and the invention of the automobile to convince the public that money laid out upon good roads is one of the very best investments. Time has educated the people until it is seen that easy and quick facilities for travel stand in the forefront—not of luxuries, but of necessities. Who, in this day, would condemn the traveler to the dismal, dreary drag over such highways as I have found described in the town and county histories of Connecticut?

At the request of Harold B. Carruth, we are happy to correct the spelling of his name on page 37 of our *Annual Report*, 1954.

NOTE: The Connecticut Historical Society is preparing a check list of clocks made by Daniel Burnap of East Windsor and would be glad to hear from anyone owning a Burnap clock or knowing of the location of one.

Colonel Experience Storrs, Connecticut Farmer and Patriot

By Ralph Adams Brown*

Colonel Experience Storrs of Mansfield, Connecticut, was one of those makers of history who receive but a small part of the recognition they deserve. Active in the political, economic and religious life of his community, highly respected and widely admired as his many public recognitions testify, the climax of his life may be said to have been the Battle of Bunker Hill. While the Connecticut farmer and Town Father did not, apparently, see frontline action during that engagement, he was second in command of all Connecticut troops that day.

Son of Huckins Storrs, a farmer of Mansfield, Experience was born on September 18, 1734.[1] His mother, Eunice, was the daughter of Deacon Experience Porter of Hadley, Massachusetts and Mansfield.[2] His grandfather had been one of the original proprietors of the town.[3] Experience was graduated from Yale College in 1759[4] and then settled down in his home town, apparently to lead the life of a typical Yankee farmer of the second half of the eighteenth century. He married Lucy Huntington of Mansfield, thus entering a family fully as important as his own. Lucy's father was Colonel Jabez Huntington, who served as sheriff of Windham County for a number of years and was active in the Patriot cause during the Revolution, occupying positions of trust and administrative responsibility.[5] Lucy died February 6, 1801, at the age of 57.[6] Experience died on the twenty-second of July of that same year, and the inscription on his tombstone reads in part as follows:[7]

> He was portly in figure, friendly in disposition, and [an] advocate for his country's rights. A lover of order, a respectable professor of the Christian Religion. In the American Conflict he sustained the rank of Colonel. From the field of war he returned a quiet and peaceful citizen, an honorable and useful member of the community. He often represented the town in the General Assembly, and for many years previous to his death exercised with reputation the office of Justice of the Peace.

In common with most of the "little" men who, in the mass, make history, there is not a great deal of information available about Experience Storrs. It is possible, however, from the scattered bits of data that can be found, to form some general impressions of the man in three areas of his life and work: his participation in or concern with the Revolutionary Cause; his activity in local and state politics; and his personal interests or abilities.

Eastern Connecticut was the center of Revolutionary activity while, contrary to the usual pattern, Tory sentiment was strongest in the West. Thus

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Windham County was in the "Patriot Belt" and Mansfield was early a center of opposition to British acts and policies. The town was, we are told, in frequent communication with Boston, and "was deeply interested and stirred by all the Revolutionary movements there."[8] From the same source we learn that Experience was one of the five men chosen to serve on the first Committee of Correspondence in Mansfield.[9] This places him among the earliest of the Radicals. For example, on the 13th of September, 1774, Captain Experience Storrs was one of the three delegates, appointed at a special town meeting, to attend a meeting at Hartford "on the interesting concerns of the present day."[10]

About a month later, on the tenth of October, Mansfield held another town meeting. Here, twenty-one months before the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, a group of Connecticut farmers drew up and adopted a set of resolutions which are not dissimilar in spirit as well as in content from the Declaration of Independence itself. In fact, it seems unfortunate that more historians have not known of this and made use of it as evidence of the widespread sentiment for freedom.[11]

Starting earlier, but in general paralleling Storr's political interest in the rights of free Americans, was his rise up the military ladder. Briefly summarized, his progress was as follows. In May, 1766, he was "established" as captain of the "2d company or trainband" in the fifth regiment of Connecticut militia.[12] He remained at this rank for eight years. Then promotions came rapidly. In October, 1774, he was raised to a majority in the same regiment.[13] At this same time Eliphalet Dyer, a veteran of the French and Indian War, became the regiment's commander. When the latter resigned, perhaps because of age or infirmity, in the following March, Storrs became the lieutenant colonel.[14] A month later, as the start of hostilities approached, Storrs was transferred to the third regiment, as second in command to Israel Putnam and directly responsible for the second company of the regiment.[15] In that capacity, at the age of forty-one, he marched to Cambridge.

Storrs' diary, covering the period from November 21, 1774, to June 28, 1775, contains brief daily comments for the period following the departure of his regiment for Cambridge.[16] Little can be found to add to the brief diary notations in describing Colonel Storrs' military experience up to the twenty-eighth of June. It has been assumed that he returned to Mansfield directly after the last notation in his diary.[17] Two references in Washington's General Orders reveal, however, that Experience Storrs probably remained at the Cambridge camp until at least as late as mid-November. In the General Orders of September 5th, Washington noted that "the General Court Martial whereof Colonel Experience Stors [*sic*] was president is dissolved."[18] About ten weeks later, on November 15th, Fitzpatrick states that a lieutenant of Colonel Experience Storrs' regiment was acquitted of having aided a mutiny.[19] The last notation might imply that Storrs had been given more responsibility—the sole command of his regiment.

Sometime during the next months Colonel Storrs returned to his Mansfield farm. In December, 1776, word reached the Connecticut Assembly that British transports were headed for Providence. Proof that Storrs had returned home and had been reassigned to his old regiment, the fifth militia, is found in the last paragraph of the record of the Assembly in regard to the above

"intelligence." It reads "Col. Elderkin and Lieut. Col. Storrs not being in a situation to march with the 5th regiment the command of said regiment was given to Major Brown."[20] At least once during his stay in Cambridge, Storrs wrote in his diary the doubts he felt as to his ability to stand the physical strain of campaigning.[21] It may be that in December of 1776 he did not feel equal to a march to Providence and the action that might follow. Or it may be that Mrs. Storrs, whose ill health is frequently noted in Experience's diary, was sick at this time.

In the *Collections* of The Connecticut Historical Society is found an indication that the reputation of Experience Storrs did not suffer because of his inability to lead his men to Providence. It would seem probable, in view of his continued service in the Connecticut militia, that his contemporaries doubted neither his courage nor his loyalty to the Patriot cause. On March 10, 1778, Storrs sent to Brigadier General J. Douglas of the Connecticut 5th Brigade of Militia, the names of the men in the 5th regiment "of said Brigade" who had entered the Continental Service.[22] Nearly two and a half years later, on July 20, 1780, Colonel Storrs made a similar report, to the same man, but this time the report came from the first regiment of militia; Storrs had been given a new command.[23] In January, 1782, the Connecticut Assembly appointed Storrs one of nine men to meet a Committee from the Connecticut Line to discuss pay due the Line for 1781.[24] Again in May of that year and in January of 1783 he was assigned a comparable task.[25] The 1783 assignment is the latest reference to Experience Storrs' military career that this writer has found.

Experience Storrs was for many years active in the political life of both Mansfield and Connecticut. A local historian, writing a century later, described the Storrs and Salter families as being "among the most wealthy and aristocratic in town."[26] Judging from the diary of Experience Storrs, it was in his case an aristocracy based on intelligence, a sense of responsibility and the esteem of his neighbors rather than upon great material wealth. The genealogist of the Storrs family, writing in 1886, notes that "In all the stirring events of the time he was active and influential. The annals of Mansfield are full of references to him as delegate to conventions, member of committees of correspondence, etc."[27] A decade later another writer commented that after his graduation from Yale, Experience "settled in his native town and soon became prominently engaged in the public service."[28]

In the twelve-year period prior to the treaty of peace which ended the Revolution, Experience Storrs was a member of the Connecticut General Assembly eleven times.[29] The following table shows the dates of such membership in the General Assembly and reveals that the period of his most active service was in the year prior to Bunker Hill. Thus his most active military and political leadership came during the same twelve-month period.[30]

May 9 to June 7, 1771
May 14 to June 6, 1772
May 12 to June 4, 1774
October 19 to November 4, 1774[31]
March 2 to March 10, 1775
April 26 to May 6, 1775
May 11 to May 31, 1775

May 9 to June 8, 1776
May, 1779
October 1779
May 8 to June 7, 1783

Mention has already been made of the meritorious and frequent service of Experience Storrs to his town and state. The types of assignment given to him may be used to indicate something of his personal traits and abilities. In addition, the diary reveals him as a man of energy, loyalty to his friends, and a devoutly religious nature. Storrs was, obviously, a leader in the church. His frequent references to attendance at Divine Services and his diary entry for January 1, 1775, give some indication as to his religious faith. The January first entry, in particular, reveals much about his philosophy of life.

In 1757, while a student at Yale, Experience was called upon by the town of Mansfield to survey the boundary line—or "run the line" as it was then called—between the "North and South parish."[32] In May, 1772, he and Nehemiah Eastabrook executed a bond for the town of Mansfield to cover the town's indebtedness to the Colony treasurer. For the next two or three years Experience had to introduce frequent petitions for a postponement of suit on the bond.[33]

Several times, during the decade of the 1770's, Experience Storrs was appointed by the General Assembly to investigate a civil suit or counter claim.[34] Had he, perhaps, studied some law? Was he, possibly, what New Englanders in the rural sections continue to call a "country lawyer" or a "pettifogging lawyer"? Twice Storrs was appointed a member of a seven-man committee to audit the accounts of John Lawrence, the Colony treasurer —in May of 1774 and May of 1776.[35] These appointments would seem to be not only an indication of Experience Storrs' integrity but also a recognition of his accuracy and knowledge of business and financial records.

In May, 1783, Storrs was one of a group appointed by the State Assembly to "sort and count the votes for state officials."[36] The office of Justice of the Peace was one of dignity and importance in the eighteenth century. During a fourteen-year period, beginning in 1783, Experience Storrs was annually appointed a Justice of the Peace for Windham County.[37] In 1789, the Assembly appointed him one of five to manage a lottery in his home town.[38] It is quite apparent that not only in his home town but throughout the state, Colonel Experience Storrs was known as a man of ability and integrity.

For the last decade of Storrs' life we have little documentary record of his activity. The traditions of his family and community, however, suggest that the pattern of his life, set in the years prior to the Revolution, was continued during his last years. We may safely assume that he continued to be a leader in the councils of his community and church, that he was a respected and admired elder statesman whose advice was frequently sought.

Connecticut farmer, deacon of his church, statesman at the local and state level, a lover of Liberty who early chose the Patriot side, became a colonel of militia and was second in command of all Connecticut troops at Bunker Hill—Experience Storrs typifies in his life that which was best and most durable among the Yankee Patriots who helped establish our nation.

(Note: *The manuscript of this article, with source references, may be consulted at The Connecticut Historical Society Library.*)

Isaac Sanford

By Newton C. Brainard

The years following the Revolutionary War were years of tremendous development in the United States, and Hartford was not lagging in its activities. Apparently the protection of patents stimulated the inventive talents of many who hoped for generous financial returns for their ingenuity. The development of inventions was not confined to those to whom mechanical pursuits was their means of livelihood. We have seen how Apollos Kinsley, trained for a medical career by Dr. Cogswell, gave it up to develop his talents as an inventor, unfortunately, without success. A recent inspection of the papers of Isaac Sanford, in The Connecticut Historical Society and the Wadsworth Atheneum, brought to light Kinsley's signature as a witness to a patent application by Sanford. Both seem to have been friends of the Hartford Wits and other members of the cultured set of Hartford at that time.

Kinsley, by his own account, invented ten or more devices and is credited with having run an automobile on Hartford's streets, although proof of this is lacking. Sanford took out two patents, neither of which appear to have been successful. He turned back to his artistic talents, painting some portraits and miniatures, but is better known as an engraver.

His first invention, in January 1797, was a machine for shearing and finishing, "on both sides at the same time," "woolen cloths of all sorts and all others that are dressed with a Nap, or sheared." Only one operative was needed and "he can shear at least three hundred yards in a day."

His second invention, also in 1797, was a machine for making hats, starting with the raw materials and leaving it formed, trimmed and "fit for the block." He anticipated modern quantity production for "The machine is constructed to work any number of Hats at once from one hat to one hundred."

Obviously he had faith in the merit of his inventions, for in June 1799 we find him in London presenting letters of introduction to Lord Jed[idia]h Campbell of Adington St., and Sir Charles Rich of Grafton St. As Thomas Seymour gave him a letter to John Trumbull, it is possible that he also wrote the letters above.

Presumably at this time he filed his patent application, which was granted in 1806. He was at Stroud in Gloucestershire in 1808 when William Lyman, from the United States Consulate in London advised him that "even in case of hostilities" he can expect six months time to return home. The War of 1812 was evidently expected.

Our papers tell little beyond this. We know that later he moved to Philadelphia, where he died about 1842, leaving his widow, who was Miss Dorcas Thomas, of Hartford, and several children. Family miniatures by him are in the Wadsworth Atheneum. Drawings of the details of his machines accompany the papers and show by their finished style something of his talents.

A Master-Craftsman of Early Guilford

by PHILIP HAMMERSLOUGH

Samuel Parmele, undoubtedly the most skillful silversmith of colonial Guilford, was born July 27, 1737. His father, Joseph Parmele, also a resident of Guilford, was born September 14, 1694. His mother was Abigail Kimberley, born in New Haven July 28, 1696. The couple were married in 1716, Samuel being the youngest of their six children.

In colonial times it was necessary for a boy to be apprenticed to a master silversmith for a period of seven years before he was allowed to practice his trade. This apprenticeship started, as a rule, when the boy was thirteen or fourteen years of age, following a custom used by the trade guilds of Europe at that time. The legal name for the document by which a boy was bound to his master was called The Articles of Indenture. In some towns this document was entered in the vital records, but unfortunately this was not the case in Guilford. We are therefore unable to discover the silversmith from whom young Parmele learned his trade. He would probably have been ready to start serving his apprenticeship around 1750. As there is no record of any silversmith working in Guilford that early, it is very possible that he learned his trade in New Haven which was not far away, and had a number of skilled workmen making silver around that date.

Samuel's first wife was Sarah Bishop whom he married when he was only twenty years old. She died April 4, 1778. In the twenty-one years of their marriage they had six children—five boys and one girl, four of their sons living to maturity. His second wife was Abigail (Ward) Eliot whom he married January 16, 1780. She was the sister of Captain Andrew Ward who commanded a company at the siege of Louisburg, and later became a general in the Continental Army. She had been previously married to Giles Hull, also at the siege of Louisburg, who died there, of measles, in 1759. Her second husband had been Wyllys Eliot who died in 1777. Samuel and Abigail Parmele had three boys, the youngest of whom, named Yelverton, was killed in the battle of Lake Champlain on Captain McDonough's flagship, *Saratoga,* in 1814.

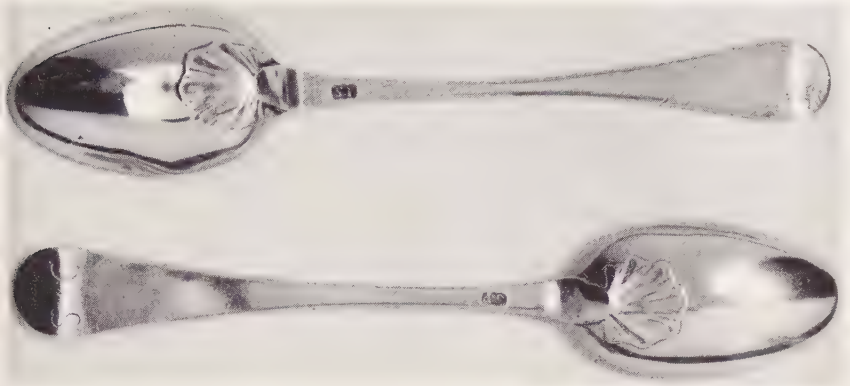
Samuel Parmele served with distinction in the Revolution. He was commissioned a lieutenant in the 5th Company, 7th Regiment in October 1770, and was promoted to captain on May 16, 1775. His company was in an engagement with the British at White Plains in 1776, and the engagement at Danbury in 1779 when the stores and other property were burned. His two eldest sons also served in the Revolution: Lumas, born in 1758, was in Captain Hand's company in 1776; and Luther, born in 1760, enlisted in Captain Painter's company on February 9, 1778. However, there has been no further record found as to the details of their service.

Our silversmith was a member of the First Congregational Church of Guilford. He made a beautiful baptismal basin and a beaker which are still used with a great deal of pride by the church. The basin is inscribed, "The Gift of Mrs. Deborah Spinning to the First Church in Guilford 1768." She was Deborah Chittenden who married John Spinning on August 2, 1721. He died May 28, 1722, age twenty-six. In 1750, the Widow Deborah Chittenden married John Pitkin of East Hartford, becoming a member of the

Cream Pot, 3⅞ inches high, initialed for Bezaleel and Fanny Bristol. From the author's collection, photo by E. Irving Blomstrann

First Congregational Church of that town the same year. She died in 1766, leaving ten pounds to the church in Guilford for a communion cup. The deacons of the church decided, since they already had three communion cups, they would use the money for a baptismal basin. This was evidently completed by Parmele in 1768, as that is the date on the inscription. Baptismal basins by Connecticut smiths are exceedingly rare. Only two others are known, one made by Cornelius Kierstead of New Haven, and owned by The First Congregational Church of Milford, the other made by Ward and Bartholomew, and owned by The Connecticut Historical Society.

The beaker is also an exceptionally well-made piece, with a flaring lip and moulded base, and is inscribed, "Mrs. Ruth Naughty Donor 1773." David and Ruth Naughty came from Boston in 1721 and opened a general



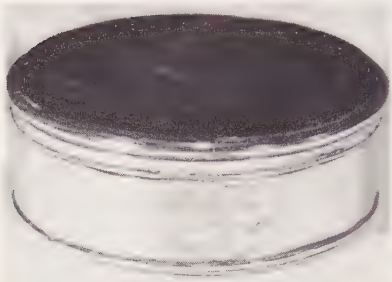
Teaspoons, length 5 inches, for Susannah Crampton, married March 25, 1761. "R.T." on other spoon unidentified. From the author's collection photo by E. Irving Blomstrann

store in Guilford which proved to be quite successful. When David died in 1739, he left an estate valued at six hundred and fifty-eight pounds. Although he left debts in Boston amounting to two thousand pounds, Madame Naughty, who lived until 1773, was not only able to pay them off, but leave a sizeable estate besides. David left a provision in his will that should his wife remarry, she was to receive only his best bed and his best silver tankard. This was probably one of the main factors which kept her single for the thirty-four years that she survived him.

Practically all the pieces of Parmele silver which have come to light show a quality of workmanship and an eye for detail that is not surpassed by any other Connecticut trained silversmith. In this connection, it should be explained that there were a few very excellent craftsmen who served their apprenticeship either in New York or Boston, and migrated here with established reputations. Their silver naturally shows a degree of sophistication never equalled by the local smiths. Of some of the pieces illustrated in this

"S.P." in shaped cartouche on Strainer Spoon photo by E. Irving Blomstrann

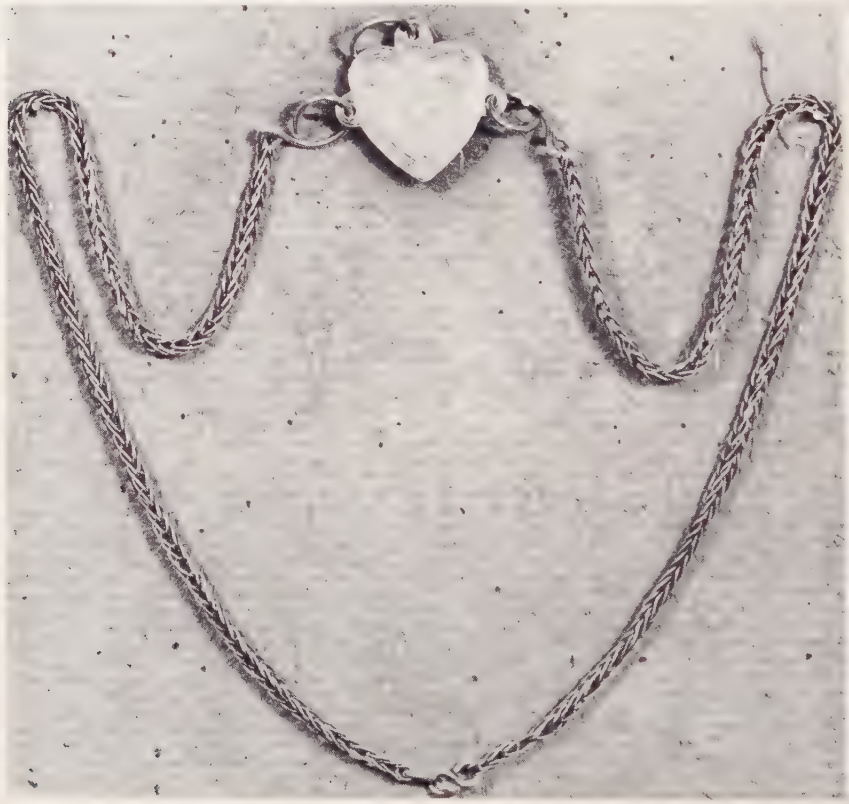
"S. Parmele" in shaped rectangle on Baptismal Basin photo by E. Irving Blomstrann



Tortoise shell and silver Snuff Box, diameter 3 inches. From the author's collection

article, the tortoise shell and silver snuff-box, the chain and pendant, and the three-legged cream pot are unusually rare items in Connecticut silver, showing a high degree of skill in the making. It is quite rare to see small spoons with an elaborate shell on the back of the bowl—a detail more often seen in some of the silver by fine Boston or Philadelphia makers.

Although there is no definite proof of the fact, the writer is of the opinion that Parmele did not make much silver after his return from the Revolution. This conclusion is based on the fact that his silver, examined in museums or private collections, was definitely made before 1775. All of his spoons have upturned handle-ends. As a general rule for silver made in the colonies, the handle-ends of spoons were downturned after 1765, or



Chain and Pendant inscribed to Ann Cushing, 1755
Courtesy of Yale Art Gallery

Strainer Spoon, length 7¾ inches. From the author's collection photo by E. Irving Blomstrann

1770. The previously mentioned baptismal basin is dated 1768, the beaker 1773, and the chain and pendant made for Ann Cushing has the date of 1756. This last-named item is probably one of his earliest pieces. Ann Cushing, by the way, remains a very shadowy figure as there is no mention of her in any of the Guilford town records or histories.

Another point of evidence is the way the owner's initials are engraved on nearly all of Parmele's silver. His engraving is in the early form, consisting of block letters in the shape of a triangle—the husband's first name in the lower left-hand corner, the family name above and in the center, and the wife's first name in the lower right-hand corner. This form of engraved initials was not used to any extent after the Revolution.

Samuel used three different marks on his silver: "S. Parmele" in a shaped rectangle, "S.P." in a serrated oval, and "S.P." in a shaped cartouche. Both the baptismal bowl and the beaker have the "S. Parmele" mark, but nearly all of his smaller pieces have one of the "S.P." marks. Mrs. Earl B. Leete of Guilford, a descendant of the Parmele family, owns a pair of tablespoons with the "S. Parmele" mark. It is interesting to note that in town histories and vital records, the Parmele name is spelled with two "e" 's, but in Samuel's punch mark it is spelled ending in a single "e".

Samuel Parmele died intestate in Guilford on January 2, 1807 at the age of sixty-nine. David Parmele, a nephew, was the administrator of the estate. The inventory done in great detail would lead us to believe that he died in anything but affluent circumstances. The following is the first page of his inventory taken from Guilford town records. On the second page of the inventory are listed his house ($210.00) and "sundry goldsmith tools" ($6.00), but these items also add up to a very modest amount.

M^{r} David Parmele, Adm^{r} on the Estate of Capt Samuel Parmele late of Guilford dec^{d}, Exhibited an Inventory of S^{d} Estate which was approved for Record in the words & figures following Viz—Inventory of the Estate of Capt Samuel Parmele late of Guilford dec^{d}—made by us the Subscribers this Day of March 1807 being first sworn according to Law viz

old Desk $1. old Hat .50 flannel under Body .12		$1.62
old blue Coat .75 old Velvet Breeches .12 p^{r} new wool hose 1.00		1.87
Pocket Hkf .8 old spotted d^{o} .8 old Breeches & 10 silver Buttons	.50	.66
forris Cloth great Coat 2.50 old Sagathy Coat .25 blue Cloth Vest.	.50	3.25
Florentine d^{o} 2.50 Buck skin Breeches 1.00		3.50
strip^{d} Velvet Pantaloons 1.50 flannel Drawers .25		1.75

Inscription on Baptismal Basin owned by The First Congregational Church, Guilford
photo by E. Irving Blomstrann

Humhum shirt .67—3 p^{r} old hose .17 old Tab'e Cloth .17		1.01
6 yds humhum 1.50 old Feathers & Bed 4.00		5.50
under Bed .17 6 old Bed Blankets 2.52 Warm S Pan 1.75		4.44
square Table .50 Tin Candle Box .12 2 p^{r} old spectacles .17		.79
Iron Bail Pail .17 3 Tobacco Boxes .17		.34
old Bellows 8 old ½ Bus^{r} 8^{d} Copper Tea Kettle 1.00		1.16
Slice & Tongs .83 Grid Iron .83 Shad Shovel .8 ax .34		2.08
Old Iron Pot .17 Skimmer & Ladle .17 2 Bowls	.25	.56

In conclusion, it would be very gratifying if this article should turn up a few more pieces of Parmele's excellently made silver. Any person reading this article who has silver with one of the three touch marks herein described is urged to notify the writer, or Mr. Thompson Harlow, Director, The Connecticut Historical Society.

PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

JUST PUBLISHED

Volume XXVIII, *Collections* of The Connecticut Historical Society.
John Cotton Smith Papers, August 22, 1814–February 3, 1815
293 pages, indexed Price $3.00 $2.40 to members
Shipping weight two pounds

Volume III, *The Waterman Family, Descendants of Richard Waterman of Providence, Rhode Island* by Donald Lines Jacobus and Edgar Francis Waterman.
804 pages, indexed Price $25 $20 to members
Shipping weight five pounds

Volumes I-II of *The Waterman Family* . . . are still available at $15 each, or both for $25.

Connecticut residents please add 3% Sales Tax

Remainders of the following have been located, and are for sale, prices net:

A Discourse on the Doctrine of the Trinity . . . by Thomas Robbins, New Bedford [Mass.], 1836 .50

The Scholar's Arithmetic: or, Federal Accountant by Daniel Adams, second edition, Leominster, Mass., 1802 1.00

Statue of Colonel Thomas Knowlton Ceremonies at the Unveiling, Hartford, Conn. 1895 1.00

The New London Willimantic & Palmer Railroad Co., a brief history compiled by Charles G. Woodward, Hartford, Conn., 1941 2.50

Records of Rev. Ransom Warner, 1823-1854 . . . by Albert C. Bates, Hartford, Conn., 1923 3.00

Sabbath School Catechism . . . by Rev. Nathan Perkins, Hartford, Conn., 1819 .50

Reminiscences of Revivals of Religion in the First Church in Hartford . . . by J. Hawes, Hartford, Conn., 1865 .50

The Shorter Catechism of the Reverend Assembly of Divines at Westminster, Hartford, Conn., 1841 .50

Seminars

8:00—10:00 P.M.

(Registration necessary)

COLLECTIBLES

October 19, 1954	"Books", Ralph Secord, East Hartford Librarian and Antiquarian Bookseller
November 16, 1954	"Silver", Philip Hammerslough, West Hartford collector
January 18, 1955	"China", Charles E. Buckley, curator, Wadsworth Atheneum
February 15, 1955	"Pewter", Thomas D. Williams, Litchfield dealer
March 15, 1955	"Coins and Medals", Richard D. Moore, Simsbury collector
April 19, 1955	"Glass", Helen McKearin Powers, well-known writer on glass

ANTIQUES, Paul Koda

October 13, 1954	"Materials"
November 10, 1954	"Tools"
January 12, 1955	"Case Furniture"
February 9, 1955	"Frame Furniture"
March 9, 1955	"Restoration"
April 13, 1955	"Refinishing"

Exhibition

October 18, 1954—January 15, 1955

Paintings attributed to William Johnston (1732-1772), working in Connecticut in the 1760's. Paintings have been lent by Lyman Allyn Museum, New Haven Colony Historical Society, Art Museum of the New Britain Institute and Amherst College.